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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Veterinary Data

PLACE ACQUIRED (BY SOURCE) Nowy Port and Gdynia

DATE ACQUIRED Fall 1946 - Spring 1947
(BY SOURCE)

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1. I made two trips to Poland, one in the fall of 1946 and one in the spring of 1947. These journeys were taken under the auspices of the US Government. My assignment in each case consisted of supervising the transporting of livestock from the US to Poland. The livestock which we transported to Poland consisted primarily of large-size animals, mainly draft horses of mixed breeds with emphasis on Percheron types. On my first trip, in addition to the draft horses, we also hauled 10 thousand chickens which were stolen from the docks by hungry and undernourished Polish citizens. The philosophy underlying the shipments of livestock was to replenish and rejuvenate Polish livestock depleted during WWII. However, those of us who were concerned with the above project agreed that the animals which we discharged, (although intended for Poland) actually were reshipped by rail to the USSR.
2. Prior arrangements had been made by the Polish Government to handle the livestock which we discharged. Corrals had been erected near the docks at Gdynia and Nowy port. The horses were to be confined to the corrals for three days where they would undergo quarantine, inspection and branding. As I can recall, very few of the animals were branded or inspected for shortly after we began to remove livestock from the ships to the corrals (which were adjacent to the railway) the Polish attendants, for some unexplained reason, began to load the draft horses aboard railroad cars.
3. The box cars were all one deckers with sliding doors -- not the US type. Air vents were cut into the sides of these cars near the top. I would estimate that 20 horses plus hay were loaded into each railway car.
4. During the course of my association with the Polish veterinarians, I was favorably impressed with their theoretical knowledge of bacteriology and might add that with reference to bacteriological theory, they appeared to be highly qualified. However, with reference to their level of competence in actual practice I was dismayed for I observed that they were far behind us. Their disregard for contamination,

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and their failure to diagnose common illnesses among the draft animals was evident. Due to several weeks of confinement aboard ship and lack of exercise, a number of animals had contracted shipping fever and bacterial fever. The Polish veterinarians were able to diagnose the above afflictions but were unable to suggest proper medication. Since Sulfa derivatives were new to these men, they were very much impressed with them and with the results. Our difficulty lay in teaching the Polish veterinarians as to proper dosages of Sulfa drugs. A Polish veterinarian who was more friendly than others, informed me that the primary interest of Polish veterinarians was in Hoof and Mouth diseases and in pneumonic types of diseases. He stated that the aforementioned were the most difficult to control and the most feared in pre-WWII Poland. A point of interest was his statement that the Polish veterinary scientists up to 1947 had almost lost professional contact with the advancements in their profession. I can recall that they were impressed with intravenous Dextrose dosage for this operation was foreign to them. [Source states that the Polish veterinarians appeared reluctant to exhibit their methods in the presence of US veterinarians. He adds that when they were originally introduced to the Poles, the Poles showed disdain and disrespect for the youthful US veterinarians. However, after the US veterinarians treated various ailments among the livestock, the Poles gradually changed their original impression.]

5. Due to the ravages of the war the Poles had very few stocks of medical supplies; consequently, they begged for Penicillin and Sulfa drugs. I visited medical supply stores in the port areas with the thought of looking over their medicines. The shelves contained no compounded drugs -- only the raw materials. The instruments were of German origin and manufacture.
6. If I attempted to evaluate the status of veterinary science in Poland today [January 1954] on the basis of my personal observations, I would presume the following:
 - a. Innovation, new ideas and medical advances trickle from point of origin to practicing veterinarians very slowly. Consequently, the general practitioners throughout the country adopt new techniques long after their discovery by leading scientists.
 - b. In conjunction with the above, I felt that the practicing veterinarians were slow in accepting changes. This left me with the thought that, as a whole, the profession was from five to ten years behind us. This opinion is premised upon my observations of Polish veterinarians in the actual application of their theoretical knowledge.

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